



# JAY BOZIEVICH

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Lane County Commissioner  
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DATE: April 27, 2015  
TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means sub-committee on Public Safety  
RE: Lane County Courthouse project funding

Co-Chairs Representative Williamson and Senator Shields:

Lane County is seeking state funding of \$1.4M for phase I of our courthouse replacement project. The total estimate of this planning and design element is \$2.8M. We were able to actively participate in the Association of Oregon Counties' process during the interim that was precipitated and guided by Chief Justice Balmer's thinking about a structured way to address the well documented statewide court facilities deficiency. At the conclusion of that process, those who participated felt secure in recommending to the Chief Justice that Lane County's proposal was sound, and should be among the projects selected for funding from the Courthouse Capital Construction Improvement Fund (OCCCIF) during the 15-17 biennium.

Lane County's courthouse was initially constructed in 1958. Lane County's Courthouse has been the subject of several independent studies that have identified significant deficiencies when measuring the building against current security requirements, building code standards, accessibility regulations and seismic loading scenarios, as well as in its ability to support modern judicial proceedings. Perhaps most significantly, Lane County's Courthouse was evaluated in 2008 as part of the Legislature's Courthouse Task Force. That statewide effort yielded a significant amount of data related to courthouses and alerted Lane County and its Board to the dire condition of its courthouse, as well as its relative ranking with other courthouses. Unfortunately, 2008 was the beginning of the Great Recession, and neither Oregon nor the County was in a financial position to pursue such a project.

The County is currently collaborating with Circuit Court staff and has engaged the National Center for the State Courts (NCSC) to assist in assessing the future needs of the court and other state agencies. NCSC will soon provide us with a report which will include a long-term court development profile, formulation of functional space standards that will serve as a baseline for the design and construction of a new courthouse, and development of a building space requirements program with estimates for occupant, functional and ancillary needs.

The County's intent is that the NCSC study will provide a basis for a detailed request for proposals (RFP) for design services. It is this project that the funding request we seek would pay help pay for. Once an architectural design firm is competitively selected through the RFP process, the County will work to complete a detailed programming effort and commence design development work for the new Courthouse. As part of this

work, the County will likely engage the services of a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) to provide guidance with regard to the cost impacts of design elements and help develop a detailed project cost estimate.

Lane County has had nascent conversations with the Oregon Department of Justice with respect to future co-location of pertinent state offices. ODJ has over twenty attorneys in leased private space in downtown Eugene, and they are often in our courthouse conducting business. It would be our intent to support the needs of their staff into our planning process and ultimately create a formal agreement when dictated by the planning and/or construction phases of this project.

The funding we hope to secure for the 15-17 biennium from the OCCIF is pivotal for Lane County's project. We believe it could serve as a model for phasing a project consistent with Chief Justice Balmer's vision for a structured evolution of efficient and safe courthouses across Oregon.

**ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED**